

Testimony in support of HB 5403

**AN ACT INCREASING PENALTIES FOR FAILURE TO YIELD TO
PEDESTRIANS IN CROSSWALKS AND FAILURE TO EXERCISE DUE
CARE TO AVOID HITTING A PEDESTRIAN OR CYCLIST.**

Judiciary Committee

March 2, 2016

Senator Coleman, Representative Tong, and members of the Judiciary Committee,

My name is Jeff Holland, I am a New Canaan resident, and am here to give testimony in support of HB 5403, AN ACT INCREASING PENALTIES FOR FAILURE TO YIELD TO PEDESTRIANS IN CROSSWALKS AND FAILURE TO EXERCISE DUE CARE TO AVOID HITTING A PEDESTRIAN OR CYCLIST.

At a time when ever increasing numbers of people are choosing to walk and bike, this legislation reinforces the message that pedestrians and cyclists are legitimate users of the public rights-of-way, and should be better protected from harm. As a volunteer EMT in my community I have seen the consequences, sometimes fatal, of vehicles striking cyclists and pedestrians. Through prevention efforts, including education, engineering, and, as proposed, enforcement, it is my hope that these incidents can be reduced or eliminated entirely.

In addition, I would like the committee to consider including those that are often the most vulnerable, people with disabilities that use mobility aids, in the language of the bill. Although I would expect that wheelchair users would be afforded the same protections as pedestrians, the language that specifies vehicles "propelled" by "human power" would seem to exclude those that use, for example, battery powered wheelchairs or scooters. Perhaps a minor text change would address this.

Thank you for your consideration of my testimony,

Jeff Holland